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EVALUATION OF UNFPA STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Report of the Executive Director

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report has been prepared in response to Executive Board decision 95/35, paragraph 8, which requested the Executive Director to conduct an evaluation of UNFPA staff training activities and to report thereon to the Executive Board, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), no later than 1997. In order to fulfill the Board's request, an external evaluation of UNFPA staff training activities by independent consultants was commissioned, under the guidance of the Fund's Office of Oversight and Evaluation. The evaluation benefited from extensive in-house consultations with the various divisions of UNFPA both at headquarters and in country offices. In addition to summarizing the results of the external evaluation, this report describes the implementation of training activities since 1992 and outlines the new directions for strengthening training as provided for in a directive issued by the Executive Director in late 1996. The directive sets out new terms of reference for staff training taking into account the findings and recommendations of evaluation activities and given the need to operate within the framework of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which was adopted in Cairo, Egypt, in September 1994.

2. As a general recommendation, the evaluators felt that in future the Fund's approach to training should be expanded to encompass a more holistic concept of human resource management.

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The first step should be a comprehensive assessment of learning and training needs. Recommendations for strengthening the training included developing a training-of-trainers strategy and the creation of learning resource teams, linked as appropriate with UNFPA Country Support Teams and technical support services. The evaluators recommended developing learning resource network links, including through distance-learning modes, to provide sustained professional support for trainers and resource persons; increased coordination with other United Nations agencies, especially at local levels; and strengthened authority for line managers, with a corresponding increased decentralization of training budgets to allow for more local training and opportunities for field staff to undertake more visits and attachments to headquarters and other field offices.

3. Key recommendations relating to delivery methods and cost planning included providing additional funds for the development of supplementary learning resource centres and equipment and materials, more inter-active computer packages, distance-learning methods and establishing networks linking trainers. Finally, specific recommendations were provided for strengthening evaluation mechanisms in UNFPA training and staff development so that they placed greater emphasis on tracking how training is reflected in work performance. Related to this were recommendations calling for managers and supervisors to take greater direct responsibility for training and to create a conducive learning environment through on-the-job training, coaching, and by following up changed behaviour after return from training events.

4. UNFPA has begun a process to prepare for a more systematic analysis of training needs based on core competencies, beginning with field managers. Meanwhile several new initiatives are under way or are being explored. These include efforts to: (a) expand and upgrade refresher programme training; (b) enhance specialized induction briefings for new UNFPA Representatives; (c) strengthen specialized and refresher training for training professionals; (d) expand resources to supplement the Training Branch staff (through such methods as training of trainers and expanded outsourcing); (e) further decentralize the training budget; (f) diversify training methodologies besides face-to-face workshop methods; (g) strengthen coordinated United Nations training in line with current reform initiatives; and (h) undertake systematic evaluations.

5. The Executive Board may wish to take note of this report.

II. STAFF TRAINING POLICY

6. UNFPA's staff training policies have evolved over time. The first staff training policy for the organization was issued in 1988. Prior to that, no structured training had been organized. The policy was revised in 1995 following an internal assessment of changing needs and new organizational challenges. This has formed the basis for all training conducted since that date. In order to provide

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a context for the external evaluation, a brief summary of the Fund's training policy and activities is presented in the next two sections of this report.

7. UNFPA has placed strong emphasis on the development of its human resources to achieve the goals set out in the ICPD Programme of Action and the other international agreements that fall within its mandate. Staff training and development are seen by the Fund as a key to achieving these goals and is thus one of the cornerstones of its organizational development. UNFPA has supported a range of training activities aimed at enhancing the operational, technical and managerial capabilities of staff members at all levels, both at headquarters and in country offices. Staff training activities have sought to enable staff members to deal effectively with the demands of a changing organization, to facilitate the exchange of good practices, to build team spirit, and to increase productivity, quality and competence. Staff training activities have included on-the-job briefings; participation in in-house and United Nations system-wide workshops; participation in external courses conducted by accredited institutions; attendance at technical and professional seminars and conferences; and special assignments and attachments at headquarters and in country offices.

8. Staff training has been provided to enable field staff to respond effectively and flexibly to the capacity-building needs of Governments; to increase substantive knowledge in the Fund's three core programme areas as well as in such cross-cutting themes as gender concerns and information, communication and education (IEC); to strengthen the administrative and financial capacity of country offices to manage programmes effectively; and to accelerate the implementation of General Assembly resolutions and United Nations system-wide policies through collaborative training with other United Nations agencies and organizations. Additionally, attention has been directed at enhancing leadership skills and managerial competencies; increasing logistical, administrative, computer and information technology capabilities; and improving language skills. Staff training activities have included orientation for new staff as well as training all new staff in UNFPA policies and procedures.

III. REVIEW OF STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

9. During the period from 1992 to 1996, the biennial staff training budget was increased from $1.3 million for the years 1992-1993 to $1.5 million for 1994-1995 and to $2.55 million for 1996-1997. With these increases in allocations, it was possible for the Fund to expand the number of training activities and workshops and to introduce new activities. Table 1 shows UNFPA's actual annual expenditures on staff training from 1992 to 1996. Expenditures for field staff rose as a proportion of overall expenditures during this time period. The unusually high expenditures in 1995 were the result of the opportunity provided by the post-ICPD UNFPA Global Meeting of all staff that was held in Rye, New York, in that year. This unique gathering allowed the Fund to provide several training activities both before and after the meeting to a large number of staff members.

10. Generally, the costs of staff training have increased over time, although UNFPA has been able to minimize these increases by pursuing savings at every opportunity. Training activities are approved in accordance with policy guidelines that specify that each training request should be carefully screened to match training content with job requirements. The aim has always been to find the most cost-effective venue, to minimize training time away from work and to offer the most appropriate mode of training. Innovative use of locally available or visiting resource persons, cost-sharing arrangements with inter-agency partners, minimal travel expenditures and use of materials already available have all been pursued as ways of keeping costs down. Staff training curricula have been drawn from existing sources, including manuals and modules from both public and private sector training courses, in order to realize savings in development and design costs. The development of training tools has been confined to those that are interdisciplinary and were previously unavailable, and, whenever possible, such development costs have been shared with other partners.

TABLE 1 - UNFPA STAFF TRAINING ANNUAL EXPENDITURES, 1992 - 1996

Year	Field Expenditures	HQ Expenditures	Total Expenditures
1992	$193,312 (58%)	$138,922 (42%)	$332,234
1993	472,236 (73%)	171,801 (27%)	644,037
1994	564,296 (83%)	110,126 (17%)	674,442
1995	806,800 (90%)	88,075 (10%)	894,875
1996	501,856 (68%)	241,003 (32%)	742,859

11. Table 2 shows UNFPA staff training activities by programme category, and by numbers trained or briefed, for the same period, 1992 to 1996. The table also includes the numbers of workshops and briefings and the person training days achieved (i.e., the number of staff who attended multiplied by the number of training days) as an indicator of the extent of training activity. The numbers of field staff in attendance at training events and workshops grew considerably from 1994 on because special attention was paid to their particular needs given the expanding responsibilities of country offices as a result of the increased decentralized approval authority in 1993 and the ICPD in 1994. A detailed description of UNFPA staff training activities is presented in annex 1.

TABLE 2: UNFPA STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES BY PROGRAMME CATEGORY, NUMBERS TRAINED OR BRIEFED BY YEAR, 1992-1996*

ORIENTATION/BRIEFINGS	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Policies and procedures orientation for newly recruited national programme staff	0	1 Workshop 26 Staff 260 PTD**	1 Workshop 22 Staff 286 PTD	0	1 Workshop 23 Staff 299 PTD
Induction briefing for Junior Professional Officers	4 Briefings 8 Staff 16 PTD	3 Briefings 13 Staff 39 PTD	1 Workshop 10 Staff 40 PTD	1 Workshop 14 Staff 84 PTD	1 Workshop 11 Staff 66 PTD
Policies and procedures for newly recruited HQ General Service staff	0	1 Workshop 10 Staff 40 PTD	1 Workshop 10 Staff 50 PTD	0	1 Workshop 12 Staff 48 PTD
Induction briefing for newly recruited UNFPA Representatives/ UNDP Representatives	5 Briefings 8 Staff 62 PTD	3 Briefings 8 Staff 40 PTD	7 Briefings 21 Staff 98 PTD	2 Briefing 29 Staff 66 PTD	6 Briefings 10 Staff 55 PTD
TRAINING WORKSHOPS					
Programme training workshop for senior programme staff in the field	0	0	0	1 Workshop 19 Staff 152 PTD	1 Workshop 19 Staff 95 PTD
Management development workshop for UNFPA Representative and senior headquarters officers	0	2 Workshops 40 Staff 200 PTD	2 Workshops 34 Staff 170 PTD	1 Workshop 13 Staff 65 PTD	2 Workshops 32 Staff 160 PTD
Management coordination for senior field representatives	4 Workshops 9 Staff 81 PTD	5 Workshops 9 Staff 81 PTD	3 Workshops 7 Staff 63 PTD	3 Workshops 11 Staff 99 PTD	2 Workshops 2 Staff 18 PTD
Finance information management workshop for UNFPA Representatives and senior programme staff	0	0	0	3 Workshops 91 Staff 253 PTD	0

TABLE 2 (CONT'D) : UNFPA STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES BY PROGRAMME CATEGORY, NUMBERS TRAINED OR BRIEFED AND BY YEAR, 1992-1996 *

TRAINING WORKSHOPS (Cont'd)	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Finance information management workshop for field finance and administration staff	2 Workshops 38 Staff 264 PTD	2 Workshops 48 Staff 240 PTD	2 Workshops 42 Staff 294 PTD	0	1 Workshop 18 Staff 108 PTD
Advocacy/media/gender/training workshops for UNFPA Representatives, senior programme staff and senior headquarters staff	0	0	2 Workshops 12 Staff 24 PTD	12 Workshops 191 Staff 307 PTD	1 Workshop 10 Staff 30 PTD
Refresher training for headquarters General Service staff (writing skills, financial/accounting policies and procedures, procurement and stress management)	0	2 Workshops 88 Staff 218 PTD	1 Workshop 25 Staff 75 PTD	0	7 Workshops 127 Staff 127 PTD
INDIVIDUAL/OTHER TRAINING					
Country Office/interagency/educational assistance programme/external training programme	62 Staff 154 PTD	67 Staff 155 PTD	72 Staff 186 PTD	161 Staff 367 PTD	185 Staff 457 PTD
TOTAL number of workshops/briefings	15	19	20	23	23
TOTAL number of staff briefed/trained	125	309	255	529	449
TOTAL number of staff training days	577	1,273	1,286	1,393	1,463

* Figures do not include Management Information Service (MIS) training provided under a separate budget.
** PTD=person training days

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IV. EVALUATION

12. The external evaluation that was requested by the ACABQ was designed to assess the cost-effectiveness of UNFPA's staff training programmes during the period 1992-1996 and to provide recommendations for strengthening future staff training efforts. The principal training activities evaluated were major group training workshops -- orientation workshops, financial management, general managerial, programming and communication skills training. The training courses that were subject to evaluation constituted 70 per cent of training expenditures in the period under review. Since the bulk of UNFPA's training resources each year had been used in training field staff, the evaluators visited six country offices, two each in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific, and one each in Arab States and in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, interviews and an electronic-mail survey were used to collect information from a sample of trainees and their supervisors in other country offices and at headquarters. The evaluators undertook a cost-benefit analysis of the major selected training programmes. Direct and indirect costs and measurable and non-quantifiable benefits were examined against the length of the programme, the professional level of the staff being trained, the numbers trained and the amount of resources used, in order to produce comparative rating assessments between the major training programmes.

13. Overall, the evaluators noted that staff training funds were used effectively and efficiently, particularly by sharing costs with other events, whenever possible. It was found that the Training Branch had continually improved the quality of what was offered on the basis of regular reviews. To match the expansion in the training budget, the evaluators found a corresponding volume of workshops and participants over the period while staffing of the Training Branch had remained compact, with two professional and two general service staff, given the volume of work undertaken and in comparison with similar organizations. The small staff had accomplished significant gains in training coverage and range. The overall judgement was that the training provision within UNFPA had made a significant and notable contribution to the organization's vital knowledge and skill acquisition over the period.

14. With reference specifically to performance impact, defined as stated or observable change in work practice, the evaluators noted many constraints. A considerable passage of time had occurred between the training events reviewed and the impact assessment, thereby distorting the perspectives needed to match training received against actual or perceived performance changes. Some staff were unavailable to participate in the interviews or surveys, being on mission or having moved to another duty station. This was a special constraint with field staff. The number of countries visited and staff interviewed was kept small to keep travel costs reasonable. However, this resulted in a small sample population from which the evaluators were asked to derive evidence of effectiveness. The evaluators, nevertheless, attempted as thorough an investigation as possible and drew conclusions, noting, on occasion, that these were sometimes impressionistic.

15. The evaluators' rankings of the workshop programmes gave the highest ratings for cost-effective impact to finance training, followed by orientation and refresher training and other skills-based training such as advocacy, writing, and media training. The evaluators noted that, generally, technical training was more evident in its impact relative to non-technical areas of training. The lowest relative rating was accorded to generic management development training. One reason was that the cost of this programme, as for the advocacy training, was higher because of the use of external resource persons. Special attention was paid to management development training by the evaluators. In spite of their qualifications, evaluators still felt that this training programme should be continued in the future as a crucial part of training and staff development. They noted that in the past these workshops tended to be too narrow in focus, were too short, did not distinguish the needs of headquarters managers from those of field office managers, and that the target audience was also too narrow. It was felt that, in the future, consideration should be given to including middle managers in addition to senior managers and to vertical-type training, i.e., to include all team members in team group training together, regardless of level. They also noted that such training programmes in future needed to be evaluated more systematically on return to the job environment to ensure that the new skills were being used effectively.

16. Additionally, through interviews and questionnaires the evaluators looked to see how learning was being integrated into the organization, how it was being shared, and what alternative methodologies there might be for training delivery. Concerning integration of new learning, the evaluators noted that supervisors generally did not do much to help trainees to build new learning into their work. Responsibilities for making the most of training on the job was seen to lie with the returning trainee. Thus, managers and supervisors were not sufficiently involved in helping trainees with an appropriate environment to practice new and innovative approaches. The supervisors themselves, however, perceived that they provided ample opportunities for trainees to apply their new knowledge.

17. Concerning the diffusion of new learning, the evaluators concluded that a good deal of sharing did take place. Much of this appeared to be informal rather than being deliberately planned, for example, by the supervisor. Of the overall responses, slightly over 70 per cent said they did pass on new learning to others in their offices.

18. The evaluators found that in responding to questions about possible alternatives to workshops or the face-to-face methodology of training delivery staff were overwhelmingly in favour of continuing the face-to-face approach. Staff felt group training events offered particular benefits in terms of sharing, in particular for face-to-face sharing of problems and experiences between field and headquarters staff. However, the staff did express an openness to try new initiatives and alternative methods, in particular through self-learning interchange with other staff in on-the-job training;

attachments to other field offices and/or headquarters; study tours; videos and CD-ROMS; and other automated, open or distance-learning methods.

19. The overall problems noted by the evaluators were that they found that the approach to training tended to be too narrow and lacked systematic follow-up evaluation. While assessments had been carried out during or immediately following training events on what the participants had learned and on their reactions to the training, no system to track impact over time had been put in place. Needs analysis was not systematically documented and staff sometimes perceived training attendance as being mandatory, the result of top-down decisions. On the other end, the evaluators noted that, in general, the training workshops had provided for significant advances in the acquisition of vital knowledge and skills. In addition to indications of overall improvement in work practices, there was evidence of such unquantifiable and invaluable benefits as improvements in performance motivation and confidence-building. In order to address the difficulties and challenges for the future, the evaluators underscored specific problems relating to training approach and structure; needs analysis and links to human resource development; training strategy; training delivery and cost planning; and evaluation for impact assessment. Specific possible solutions were offered in all these areas and are reflected in the proposals for further strengthening the Fund's learning environment in section V below.

20. As a general recommendation, the evaluators felt that in future the approach to training should be expanded to encompass a more holistic concept of human resource management. The first step should be a comprehensive assessment of learning and training needs. Recommendations for strengthening the training included developing a training-of-trainers strategy and the creation of learning resource teams, linked as appropriate with the Country Support Teams and the technical support services. The evaluators recommended developing learning resource network links, including through distance-learning modes, to provide sustained professional support for trainers and resource persons; increased coordination with other United Nations agencies, especially at local levels; and strengthened authority for line managers, with a corresponding increased decentralization of training budgets to allow for more local training and opportunities for field staff to undertake more visits and attachments to headquarters and other field offices.

21. Key recommendations relating to delivery methods and cost planning included providing additional funds for the development of supplementary learning resource centres and equipment and materials, more inter-active computer packages, distance-learning methods and establishing networks linking trainers. Finally, specific recommendations were provided for strengthening evaluation mechanisms in UNFPA training and staff development so that they placed greater emphasis on tracking how training is reflected in work performance. Related to this were recommendations calling for managers and supervisors to take greater direct responsibility for training and to create a conducive learning environment through on-the-job training, coaching, and by following up changed behaviour after return from training events.

V. PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER STRENGTHENING STAFF TRAINING

22. Based on the evaluation findings and the recommendations of an internal management review, UNFPA took important strides in late 1996 to strengthen the learning and training function within the organization. The Executive Director issued a directive on UNFPA staff training that outlined new terms of reference for staff training and development and set out new initiatives for implementation that continue to give priority to staff training as a crucial part of human resource management and organizational development.

23. The Training Branch has been transferred to the Division of Finance, Personnel and Administration, with two professionals and two support staff. This now enables closer links between the personnel and training functions. An Advisory Committee on Training under the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) has been revitalized to provide for a broad-based policy approach to learning with inter-divisional representation at the Director level.

24. UNFPA has begun a process to prepare for a more systematic analysis of training needs based on core competencies, beginning with field managers. Meanwhile several new initiatives are under way or are being explored. These include efforts to: (a) expand and upgrade refresher programme training; (b) carry out specialized induction briefings for new UNFPA Representatives; (c) strengthen specialized and refresher training for training professionals; (d) expand resources to supplement the Training Branch staff (through such methods as training of trainers and expanded outsourcing); (e) further decentralize the training budget; (f) diversify training methodologies besides face-to-face workshop methods; (g) strengthen coordinated United Nations training in line with current reform initiatives; and (h) undertake systematic evaluations.

25. Internal reviews of the content of all training curricula to match the upgrading of specific skills and competencies have been initiated, beginning with project- and programme-related field workshops. Analytical and assessment methods and tools are being introduced into course contents, including logical framework and stakeholder analyses. Management training is also being reviewed to take account of the recommendations of the evaluation and to ensure that it responds to UNFPA's needs. Specially tailored training is already being pilot tested for new UNFPA Representatives. Induction briefings have become more structured and for longer duration and will include attachments at headquarters and to selected country offices in order to observe best practices. The training staff will continuously undertake refresher training themselves in order to upgrade training techniques and methods and their own professional knowledge and skills.

26. To further enhance training capacity, a training-of-trainers strategy is being planned to extend the learning environment; this will include using both in-house and external assistance in specific skills

and competency development. A series of interventions are being explored to support the key training of focal persons who will then be provided with continuous support through electronic means, information, materials, packages and distance-learning networks. Core teams of trainers, UNFPA officers from various divisions at headquarters, the country offices and the Country Support Teams and technical support services will be equipped with training skills so that they can be called upon as trainers for specific training activities. Given the limited staffing at central level, and in order to diversify resources, greater use of outside experts and institutions will be used to supplement in-house trainers. In 1996, an initial phase of decentralization of the training budget was launched. This further facilitated managers in country offices in using local training expertise and opportunities flexibly and in collaborating with other United Nations system partners at the local level. In late 1997, a review of this experience will be made with the view to further increase the decentralization of training budgets to the field, if appropriate.

27. The proposal for the delivery of training during the next biennium, 1998-1999, that is being submitted to the ACABQ for its consideration reflects UNFPA's commitment to continue to deliver quality training through the most cost-effective mechanisms and with expanded, faster-paced response to training needs as they are identified. Workshop training will continue to be needed in introducing new policy and programme guidelines, in increasing substantive knowledge and in updating staff on changing financial procedures in line with the increasing decentralization of the organization. At the same time, however, increased use of alternative and more cost-effective delivery training avenues are being explored to widen the support given to resource teams of trainers in the field by providing them with resources and equipment for new training methodologies, including open and distance learning and interactive electronic and computer systems, as feasible. The computer and electronic infrastructure that has been established within UNFPA now allows for faster information flows on training offerings as close to duty stations as possible, including various South-South training offerings. As part of this effort, a register of training opportunities will be explored to list available training aids, training packages, and materials.

28. UNFPA has been an active supporter of greater coordination in training throughout the United Nations system. Close collaboration and benefits have been realized in the coordination efforts of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), the Consultative Committee on Policy and Operational Questions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (CCPOQ/ACC) and with the United Nations Staff College (UNSC) in Turin. UNFPA will continue to support management coordination training for senior field representatives as part of the efforts to build a coordinated United Nations learning organization. UNFPA will strengthen its support for coordinated training as part of United Nations reform initiatives and continue to second a full-time adviser for strengthening the United Nations Resident Coordinator System and post conference follow-up. UNFPA will continue to develop its links with the Chiefs of Learning Forum, which provides electronic access among the chiefs of training of contributing United Nations organizations to facilitate faster communications and networking for coordinated system-wide training. Further efforts

in the future will be made to use similar mechanisms to strengthen connections at regional and country levels between other United Nations organizations and development partners.

29. Training activities will continue to be evaluated to assess the impact of these activities not only for trainee knowledge and reaction during and immediately after training interventions but also for impact assessment linked to needs-based criteria. Greater emphasis will be placed on assessing the impact of training activities through increased involvement of managers and supervisors. Managers and supervisors will be responsible for fostering a learning environment through on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring as part of ensuring the continuum from learning to improved day-to-day job performance, as well as ongoing monitoring of the impact of the training. Through the year-end performance appraisal exercise managers and supervisors will be called upon to assess the results of the training received by their staff and comment on the impact of overall job performance.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

30. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the Report on UNFPA Staff Training Activities.

ANNEX 1

Description of UNFPA Training Programmes

1. Orientation and training workshops. UNFPA's orientation and training workshops are designed to impart an overall understanding of the context of UNFPA's work within the United Nations system and of the substantive areas in which it works; to enhance skills in the design and implementation of projects and programmes; and to increase awareness of financial, audit and administrative rules and regulations. Since 1992, the content of the training has been expanded in depth and the duration has been lengthened to increase training on the Fund's computerized financial procedures. Since 1994, UNFPA has conducted training for newly recruited Junior Professional Officers. This training has become increasingly structured and of longer duration. Until 1994, such training had been carried out by UNDP with only 1-2 days of briefings being provided by UNFPA. The aim of this training has been to shorten the time needed for learning on the job and to increase the effectiveness and productivity of staff more rapidly. Since 1993, all new General Service staff have attended structured group workshops on the procedures relating to office administration, including techniques for improved filing, communications and information management, personnel and hiring procedures. Additionally, all new UNFPA Representatives, as well as UNDP Resident Representatives who requested briefings, were provided with intensive and brief sessions on the policies and procedures of UNFPA prior to assuming assignments. These briefings ranged from 1-2 days in the case of UNDP Resident Representatives to 2-3 weeks in the case of UNFPA Representatives, including briefings in another country office, depending on their individual needs.

2. Refresher training. Refresher training for senior field programme staff was introduced in 1995. The content has been structured to help field staff develop their programme design and appraisal skills and to share key operational strategies for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. These workshops also aim to increase substantive knowledge in reproductive health, population and development strategies, and advocacy, and to help these staff members understand better how to mainstream gender and IEC within the Fund's country programmes.

3. Management development. Management development training workshops were introduced in 1993 to enhance competencies in team-building, decision-making, communication, and the management of organizational change. These workshops are designed to follow up on earlier introductory programmes that deal with work planning, staff organization and personnel appraisal. A total of 95 per cent of field and headquarters senior staff attended these management development workshops, which have been conducted by external consultants.

4. UNFPA has also supported the inter-agency United Nations Staff College-sponsored workshops on Management Coordination for Senior United Nations Field Representatives held in Turin, Italy. The aim of these workshops is to increase awareness and application of common United Nations programme frameworks and to strengthen competencies for coordinated assistance to

national capacity-building at the country level. These workshops bring together the entire United Nations country team in a selected country for an intensive session designed to foster and strengthen cooperation in the country concerned. Since 1992, UNFPA Representatives of those country teams selected have participated in every workshop either as participants or as resource persons. A few headquarters technical staff and the Chief of Training have also served as resource advisers for this training effort. Since 1995, UNFPA has seconded a staff adviser to the United Nations Staff College at Turin to assist in developing curricula that reflect the ICPD Programme of Action.

5. Financial management. With the increased organizational emphasis on accountability and sound management that has accompanied greater decentralization, additional workshops on finance management have been conducted for national finance and administration staff as well as for UNFPA Representatives. The content of these workshops has covered financial rules and regulations, audit procedures, guidelines for control, operation and reporting of expenditures and the use of increasingly computerized systems for financial planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting for both programme and APSS budgets.

6. Advocacy and media training. Following the ICPD there have been a greater number of requests for training in advocacy skills. Advocacy training for UNFPA Representatives has been provided to prepare country-specific strategies and tools in support of operationalizing the programmes of requesting Governments. Selected headquarters senior staff also received media skills training in 1994. The greater importance of gender issues in the post-ICPD context resulted in the introduction of gender awareness training in 1995. Senior field programme officers and UNFPA Representatives and selected headquarters programme staff were included in brief and intensive sessions on gender issues in 1995.

7. Training for General Service staff. In 1996 selected General Service staff at headquarters were invited for refresher training in areas of expressed need for more effective administrative, financial, logistic, personnel-related and secretarial duties. The areas covered included organizational policies and office administration and procedures and writing skills. Techniques for handling stress positively and improving interpersonal communications skills were also included. Additionally, information management and computer-related training at the introductory, intermediate and advanced levels were provided for separately under the management information services (MIS) budget. (Description of these activities are not included in Table 2.)

8. Local training. In addition to the key group training workshops organized by UNFPA or co-sponsored with United Nations or other partners listed in Table 2, UNFPA also has supported staff at country offices in specific individualized training activities. In country offices, managers have increasingly found local training solutions to meet the needs of staff to improve their language

capabilities and to enhance staff competencies in office management and information handling. At the country level, coordinated training has been carried out with other United Nations agencies and organizations on a cost-sharing basis. These training activities have addressed such subjects as enhancing national execution, joint programming, the programme approach, Country Strategy Note planning, HIV/AIDS, Safe Motherhood and other substantive areas. Since 1995, budgetary approval for such individualized training has been decentralized.

9. External training and educational assistance. UNFPA has, in some cases, supported staff participants in external training courses or events to enhance substantive knowledge in specialized topics at advanced levels. Such training was also utilized if it was not economical to address training needs in a group setting because of the limited number of participants. UNFPA has also supported individual self-directed training for staff enrichment and career development at training, academic or accredited institutions of learning through the educational assistance programme on a 50-50 cost shared basis with the staff member. Such training was usually carried out outside of official work hours.